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Getting the Facts

In appointing a commission to investigate the murder of President Kennedy, President Johnson has chosen a panel of well known Americans and charged them with the grave responsibility of revealing the facts, whatever may be their implications. While the President apparently strove to give the commission a bipartisan makeup, we would have preferred some chairman other than Chief Justice Warren, both on account of the office and the man.

Despite the presence of Justice Owen Roberts in charge of investigating the Pearl Harbor attack — the findings of which still are in dispute — and the assignment of Justice Robert Jackson to the Nuremberg trials, another controversial subject on various grounds, we question the wisdom of involving the U. S. Supreme Court in a function of this nature.

As to Mr. Warren's personality, it is well known that he is viewed in many quarters, not exclusively the South, with something less than confidence. Aside from the race issue, his decisions have often been criticized as "easy on communists". He already is on record, in a eulogy of President Kennedy, on bigotry and hatred as contributing to the crime. It appears to us that Mr. Warren comes into the investigation already labeled with a prejudice of his own.

Mr. Allen Dulles, former chief of the Central Intelligence Agency, is a member of the commission and might have been a less controversial choice for chairman. The investigation is too important to the interests of the Republic to run any risk of political maneuverings or sweeping truth under the rug to avoid domestic or international ill feeling. The people are entitled to know the facts. We hope they will